THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI ASHOK GEHLOT) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Government is committed to welfare of both, the handloom weavers and Beedi workers. A number of Welfare schemes are in operation to provide insurance cover to handloom weavers and promote savings and to provide them with suitable dwelling and work places. These schemes are in addition to those operating in various States which provide medical assistance and the assistance in buying new spectacles to handloom weavers. However, promotion of handloom sector also requires schemes for increasing productivity, reducing drudgery of work, increasing marketability of handloom products and strengthening the handloom agencies. Schemes are in operation to look after these needs of the handloom weavers also.

Amnesty International's plan to launch campaign against India

1644. SHRI DHULESHWAR MEENA : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it has come to Government's notice that the Amnesty International is planning to launch a world-wide campaign this year to curb the alleged human rights violation in India for which it may use a third country approach ;

(b) if so, whether Government have been able to pinpoint which is this third country ; and

(c) what precautionary measures Government have taken or propose to take to counteract this malicious propaganda against India from a foreign soil ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO) : (a) and (b) According to some reports, Amnesty International has decided to launch a campaign alleging human rights violations in India. We are not, however, aware of the "third country approach" in this regard.

(c) Our Missions have been provide with relevant material to counter suc propaganda.

Pak Aid to Terrorists

1645. SHRI DHULESHWAR MEENA Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIR be pleased to state :

(a) whether his attention has bee drawn to the news item "U.S. probles Pa aid to terrorists" appearing in the 'Pioneer New Delhi, dated, April 15, 1992;

(b) if so, the details in this regard; anc

(c) the reaction of the U.S. delegation to Pakistan backing certain "terrorists" movements especially against India ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIR (SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO) : (a) Yes Sir.

(b) and (c) Mr. Peter Burleigh, US Co ordinator for Counter International Terro rism visited India, Nepal and Pakistan in April, 1992. He was briefed by Govt. officials on Pakistan's abetment of terrorism in India. The US State Department's Annual Publication, "Patterns of global terrorism" realised on May 5, 1992 said *inter alia*— "there were continuing credible reports throughout 1991 of official Pakistani support for Kashmiri militant groups engaged in terrorism in Kashmir as well as support to Sikh militant groups engaged in terrorism in Punjab. The support allegedly includes provision of weapons and training".

Passports Issued from Passport Office in Rajasthan

1646. SHRI B. L. PANWAR : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to refer to the answer to Unstarred Question 1669 given in the Rajya Sabha on 9th March, 1992 and state :

(a) what is the average number of applications submitted per day with the passport offices in Rajasthan;

(b) the number of passports issued per day from there ;

(c) whether computer facilities are made available in the Passport offices in all the States particularly in Rajasthan; and

(d) if not, whether there is any proposal to this effect, if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO): (a) The average number of Applications for passports submitted per day in Jaipur Passport Office in Rajasthan during the period 1-4-92 to 28-4-92 is 503.

(b) The average number of passports issued per day during the same period is 743.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) It is proposed to install computers in seven passport offices during the current Financial year.

Applications for visiting Pakistan on Pilgrimage

1647. SHRI KAMAL MORARKA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) what is the number of Indians who visited Pakistan for pilgrimage during the period 1989—92, year-wise;

(b) what is the number of applications that are presently pending with the Government for visiting Hindu Shrine Katas Raj in Pakistan; and

(c) what steps are being taken to send these pilgrims at the earliest to the shrines ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO): (a) Under the Protocol on Visits to Religious Shrines signed between India and Pakistan in 1974, approximately 8300 Indians visit Pakistan for pilgrimages every year.

(b) and (c) Government have received an application for a visit by 150 persons to Sri Katasraj. Action has been taken to process this application.

U.N. Secretary-General's offer for resolving Kashmir Issue

1648. SHRI SHIV PRATAP MISHRA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to a newsitem that appeared in the 'Hindustan Times' of 27th April, 1992 under the caption "Ghali ready to assist on Kashmir" wherein it has been stated that United Nations Secretary-General Boutros Boutros Ghali has offered to assist in any manner that might help resolve the Kashmir issue; and

(b) if so, Government reaction thereon ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Government does not seek any UN assistance in this regard.

Exploring Areas of Cooperation between SAARC Countries

1649. SHRI BHUVNESH CHATURVEDI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is any proposal to explore areas of cooperation between SAARC countries and ASEAN countries;

(b) if so, the details therof;

(c) whether any proposals have been put up by India before the SAARC countries in this regard; and

(d) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO): (a) to (d) India has been of the view that proposals in regard to cooperation between SAARC and other regional and international organisations should stem from SAARC itself.

At the Fifth SAARC summit held in November, 1990, the SAARC Secretariat was authorised to share information and exchange reports etc. with the Secretaries